DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 028 893 RE 001 694

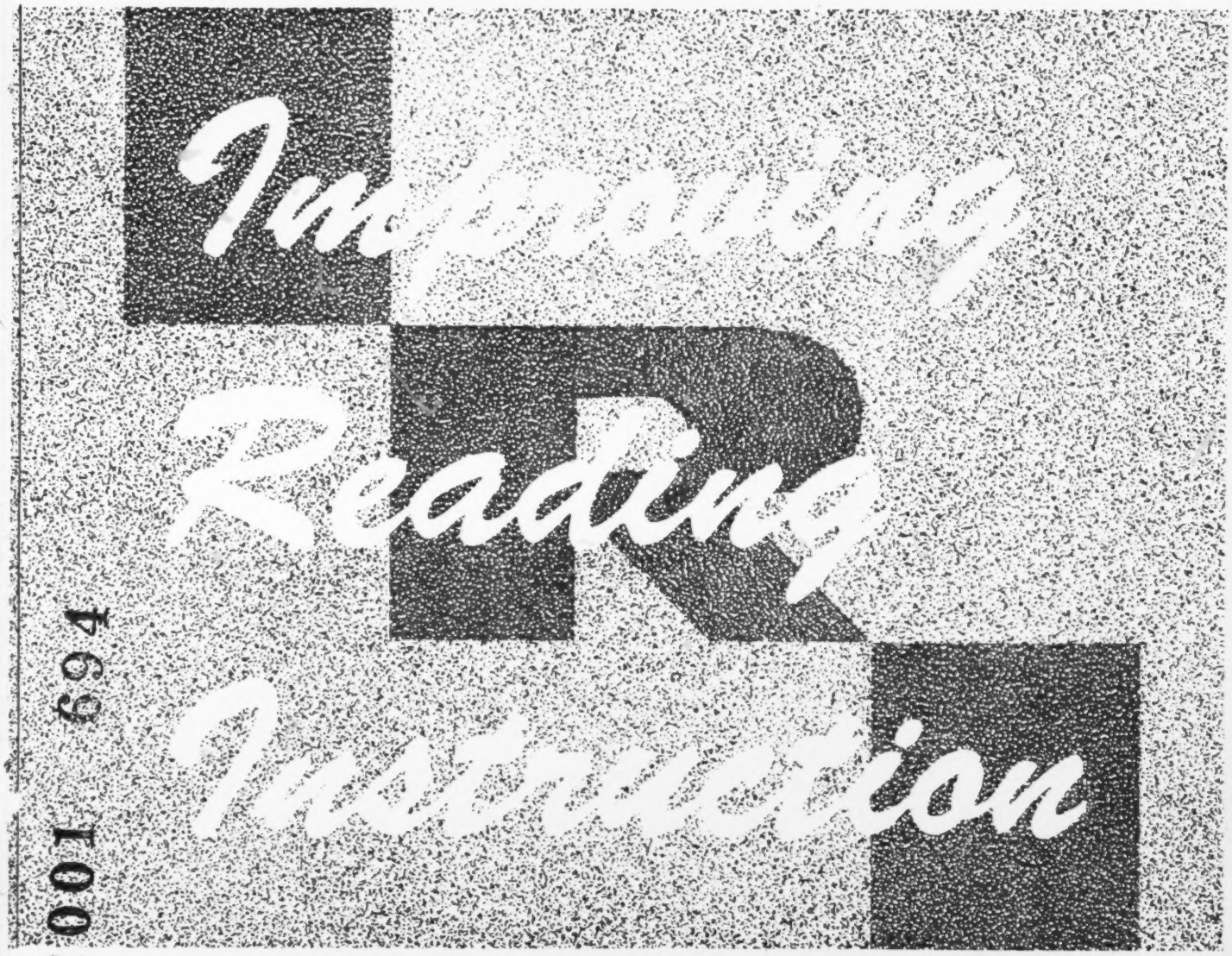
An Inventory of Reading Attitude. Improving Reading Instruction, Monograph 4.
San Diego County Dept. of Education, Calif.
Pub Date Nov 61
Note-23p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.25
Descriptors-*Attitude Tests, Classroom Research, *Elementary School Students, Group Counseling, Individual Counseling, Inservice Teacher Education, Parent Conferences, *Reading, *Reading Interests, *Reading Tests, Student Attitudes

The San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude was developed as part of a reading study project in 1959-60 comparing three approaches to reading instruction. The 114 items on the original instrument were item analyzed, and the 25 most discriminating items are included in the revised form. Data for standardization are presented for 381 primary-grade students and for 376 intermediate-grade students in San Diego, California. Tables report the norms as expressed in stanines. Teacher judgment of reading attitudes of the three students with poorest reading attitudes and the three students with best reading attitudes in each classroom are compared with inventory scores. The difference between the two groups was found to be significant well beyond the 1 percent level of confidence when independent teacher judgment of reading attitude was used as the validity criterion. Uses of the inventory discussed include group counseling, individual counseling, classroom research, inservice education, and parental conferencing. A copy of the inventory and an answer key are included. (CM)

ED028893

IRI monograph 4

AN INVENTORY OF READING ATTITUDE



RE 001 694

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS • DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

IMPROVING READING INSTRUCTION

AN INVENTORY OF READING ATTITUDE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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MONOGRAPH NO. 4

Superintendent of Schools
Department of Education, San Diego County
6401 Linda Vista Road, San Diego, California 92111

November 1961
Reprinted December 1965

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FOREWORD

Too often teachers react negatively to the much overworked phrase, "Research says. . ." Research, they think, is something somebody else does somewhere else dealing with topics much complicated by the gobbledegook of definitions, footnotes, and statistical symbolism. They may even envision the researcher as a person wearing a white coat and forgetting to eat at regular intervals.

The present research report has some statistical razzle-dazzle, some light patches of educational jargon, but fortunately the researchers were not somebody else, somewhere else. They were teachers. They were right here in San Diego County. One of them might have been your co-worker in the next room.

The main objective of the study was very simple: to improve instruction in reading. The people in the best position to do this, of course, were teachers who wanted to improve their instruction in reading.

Many teachers felt that there must be more than one way to teach reading. This, incidentally, is also the conclusion (to date) drawn by those who have summarized masses of educational research dealing with the teaching of reading. It seemed quite logical, then, to decide on researching three approaches to reading instruction instead of one.

Teachers (like their pupils and every other human being) do most things better when they want to and when they have some

choice in the matter. This principle of motivation was strictly adhered to in developing the design of the study. It is felt that this voluntary participation based on interest in or inclination toward a particular approach was a key element in the success (as indicated by the teacher-researchers) of the study.

Teachers don't mind theory if that theory can be implemented in practice. A large portion of the teacher-researcher's time was used to just that end. The in-service phase of the project provided a thorough review of the theory of each approach and its application to the classroom situation. The experimental phase concentrated upon daily application of the theory in actual practice.

To paraphrase and summarize at the same time: "This was a project of the teachers, for the teachers, and by the teachers of San Diego County." The teacher-researchers are naturally quite anxious to share their experience with all who are interested. No other justification seems necessary for this monograph and the ones to follow.

Monographs which report specific aspects of the study are planned. They will include:

Monograph No. 1— Report of the Reading Study Project
Monograph No. 2— A Description of Three Approaches to the Teaching of Reading
Monograph No. 3— A Teacher Inventory of Approaches to the Teaching of Reading
Monograph No. 4— An Inventory of Reading Attitude
Monograph No. 5— Analysis of Pupil Data: San Diego County Reading Study Project

This monograph was prepared by the Reading Study Project Committee with the assistance of Dr. William E. Clarke and Dr. Glenn W. Elliott of the Department of Education, San Diego County.

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INTRODUCTION

An Inventory of READING ATTITUDE

Department of Education, San Diego County

Children's attitude toward reading contributed greatly in analyzing the effectiveness of three selected approaches to the teaching of reading during the San Diego County Reading Study Project. This study, conducted in twelve elementary schools of the county during the 1959-60 school year, dealt with the analysis and description of the BASIC, INDIVIDUALIZED, and LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACHES to the teaching of reading. In designing the study, the Reading Study Project Committee decided to measure the effectiveness of each approach with children in terms of their attitude and personality as well as reading achievement.

Perusal of the professional literature in the field repeatedly showed that success in reading is measured by more than the scores children receive on standardized achievement tests. Many references were found concerning the importance of attitude upon reading success. These included statements about the relations of attitude toward the reading process itself, the degree of success in reading and its relationship upon attitude, and the development of attitudes from the content of the reading material. Generally, it appears there is agreement among

authorities in the reading field that attitude and reading are closely interrelated.

An example of the agreement regarding the interrelatedness of attitude and reading is stated by Gates in the National Society for the Study of Education, Fortieth Yearbook on Reading in the Elementary School: "Attitudes as well as emotions are involved in and affected by reading."

Burton in his book on Reading in Child Development summarizes the task of the school regarding the development of attitude toward reading in the following manner:

> Children bring to school a great variety of attitudes and interests, some favorable to learning to read, others unfavorable. Pupils from some homes are eager to learn to read, filled with enthusiasm and expectancy. Those from other homes are passive to learning to read, have no apparent incentive for learning; those from still other homes are actually opposed to learning to read, sensing fear or dread of the process. The school must take these children just as they come, help some of them to maintain favorable attitudes and interests which they already possess, and help others to develop favorable attitudes and interests which they lack.

Because of the importance of attitude to reading, the Reading Study Project Committee felt that a measure of reading attitude should be included in the design of the project. A search for tests or inventories which were already developed failed to uncover any instruments which would be satisfactory for this study. Therefore, an Inventory of Reading Attitude was devised by the project committee for use in the project. This 114-item inventory was administered at three different testing periods by 67

teachers to approximately 1,750 students, grades one through six. Although the scores on the original 114-item inventory were found to be useful, it was felt that a shorter instrument was needed for general classroom usage.

From the data gathered during the project it has been possible to analyze statistically each of the 114 items of the original instrument and to identify those items which were most discriminating. From the item analysis, 25 items were selected to be included in the revised form of the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude.

This monograph is the fourth of a series which reports the results of the total Reading Study Project. It includes (1) a technical report on the inventory, (2) a copy of the standardized inventory, and (3) suggested uses of the inventory. This inventory may be reproduced for noncommerical use. When the inventory is reproduced, appropriate recognition of the Department of Education, San Diego County, is requested.

TECHNICAL REPORT FOR
SAN DIEGO COUNTY INVENTORY OF READING ATTITUDE

Standardization of the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude

The standardization of the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude was conducted in the spring of 1961. Four elementary schools were selected at random from the schools of San Diego County, and at each school six classrooms of students (one classroom each for grades one to six) were administered the instrument.

The schools participating in the standardization were Brier Patch, La Mesa-Spring Valley School District; Castle Park, Chula Vista City School District; Central, Escondido Union School District; and Meridian, Cajon Valley Union School District.

As a result of the standardization administration of the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude data were available for 381 students in grades one to three and 376 students in grades four to six. On the assumption that there might be systematic differences between the scores of primary and intermediate grade students, frequency distributions of the two groups were prepared separately. Examination of the frequency distributions revealed, however, that no significant differences could be observed between the two groups. That is, both primary and intermediate grade students tended to be distributed along the

score scale in approximately the same fashion. The data presented in Table 1 support this finding.

Table 1. Lower Quartiles, Medians, and Upper Quartiles in Raw Scores for Primary and Intermediate Students in the Standardization of the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude

Group	First Quartile	Median	Third Quartile	N
Primary	14	18	21	381
Intermediate	13	18	20	376

The range in raw scores for the primary group was 0-25 and for the intermediate group 1-25. In the light of these findings it was decided to present only one norms table to be used with all students in grades one to six.

Norms

Raw scores permit ranking students with respect to their scores on the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude but are otherwise of limited value. A score scale which has interpretive value is needed for more meaningful interpretations. The stanine scale was selected for interpreting San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude scores. A stanine is a value along a nine-point scale of normalized standard scores (standard nine). Scores range from a low of 1 to a high of 9, with the value 5 representing the average performance of students in the norm group. Raw scores on the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude are converted to stanines by referring to the norms table reported as Table 2. The approximate per cent of students in the norm group who scored at each stanine value is also reported.

Table 2. Norms Table for San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude (Grades 1-6)*

Raw Scores	Stanines	Approximate Per Cent at Each Stanine in the Norm Group
25	9	4 (Superior)
23-24	8	7
21-22	7	12 (Above Average)
19-20	6	17
16-18	5	20 (Average)
13-15	4	17
10-12	3	12
7- 9	2	7 (Below Average)
0- 6	1	4 (Poor)

The Norms Table may be interpreted as follows for three examples:

Example 1. A student has a stanine of 7 on the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude. Therefore, we know he has the same score obtained by approximately 12% of the students in the norm group and that his score falls within the above range of scores.

*Based on 757 cases, grades 1-6.

Example 2. A student has a stanine of 1. We know he scored "poorly" and that his score was among the scores obtained by the lowest 4% of the students in the norm group.

Example 3. A student has a stanine of 9. We know his score is "superior," that he had 25 positive responses on the Inventory, and that approximately 4% of the students in the norm group had the same score.

Reliability

A split-halves reliability coefficeint (internal consistency) of .79 was obtained for the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude by correlating students' scores on the odd-numbered items with their scores on the even-numbered items.

Applying the Spearman-Brown Prophecy Formula to estimate the correlation which would have been obtained had data on two separate administrations of the inventory been available resulted in a reliability coefficient for the entire inventory of .89. A reliability of .89 is generally regarded as sufficient for individual evaluation.

Validity

The 25 items included in the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude were selected from the original pool of 114 items on the basis of their discriminating power. That is, items were selected which most effectively separated students with high scores on the total inventory from students who had lower scores on the total inventory. Items were avoided which a large number of students (including high and low scorers) answered

the same way. It was felt that items selected in such a fashion should yield an inventory with promising validity.

An empirical validity study was conducted at the time of the standardization of the Inventory. Each of the 24 teachers whose students took the standardization edition was asked to indicate the three students in the room who had the best attitude toward reading and the three who had the poorest attitude toward reading. The mean raw scores and standard deviations of these two groups were computed and are reported in Table 3.

Table 3. Mean Raw Scores and Standard Deviations for Two Groups of Students Judged to Differ with Respect to their Attitudes toward Reading

Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Rated "Poor" by Teachers	14.4	4.4	72
Rated "Good" by Teachers	19.8	3.4	72

Inspection of Table 3 reveals that the mean scores of the two groups differed by 5.4 raw score points. This difference was found to be significant well beyond that 1 per cent level of confidence. These data would suggest that the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude is a fairly valid measure of student attitude toward reading when independent teacher judgments of reading attitude are used as the validity criterion.

USES OF THE
SAN DIEGO COUNTY INVENTORY OF READING ATTITUDE

Exploration of pupils' attitudes toward reading offers rewarding possibilities for discovering how children feel about reading. We have much to learn about children's sentiments, interests, and innermost feelings relative to the broad field of reading and this instrument will only indicate surface responses to the way children feel. However, we believe that these surface responses should open doors which will allow teachers to gain new insights about children's reading attitudes and how they might be improved.

Elementary teachers are already taking attitudes into account in preparing learning experiences. This survey instrument will simply give them a more systematic look at reading attitudes in their classes in a form which will make comparisons with a larger sample possible. (See Table 3, page 9, Technical Report Section.)

Group Counseling

Once the teacher has used the Inventory to assess present attitudes toward reading, she can immediately use the results as a teaching tool. Informal item analysis whereby the teacher summarizes the class results on various items can lead to a discussion of individual preferences and tastes in reading, or she can systematically explore individual interests. Thus she can adjust her teaching to both the child's attitude toward reading and his pattern of interests.

Class discussion can verge on group counseling as students explore attitudes about themselves and discuss why they answered questions as they did. Simply making it "all right" for students to dislike what we do poorly, may help some to live more happily with themselves. It may also serve to motivate the teacher to make reading experiences more rewarding for the students.

Formation of interest groups has long been a practice in reading instruction. Children with similar interests enjoy getting together and sharing their likes whether it be writing poetry or telling stories.

The San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude should provide information regarding children in a given class with similar interests or positive attitudes, i. e., reading and sharing recipes, reading and sharing newspapers, etc. Through a class item analysis many such interest groups might be formed.

Similarly, children with common disinterests in a topic might be formed to study their area of disinterest and thereby discover the causal factors relating to these negative attitudes. With careful teacher guidance such students might discover that acting out stories with other novices in this skill area is fun or that catalogues contain much interesting content.

Counseling with Individual Students

In many classrooms reading programs provision is made for individual counseling with children. At this time the teacher helps the youngster to evaluate his reading progress, acquire skills and understandings, and plan for future growth. A child's attitude toward reading is a vital influence upon his reading success now and in the future; therefore, healthy reading attitudes need to be developed along with skills. However, before

the teacher or pupil can attempt to improve attitudes, he needs to know what attitudes now exist and why. This then is where the reading attitude inventory can be of valuable assistance.

Much data can be gleaned from an individual discussion of why the student responded as he did—"I'm afraid they'll laugh at me if I read aloud," "We don't take any newspapers at our house," "Daddy says only sissies stay in the house and read," and "I can't read because I'm too dumb." Many avenues for helping the child may be opened as he tells his teacher how he feels.

Classroom Research

A standardized attitude inventory makes it possible for the classroom teacher to become a researcher within the four walls of her classroom. By administering the Inventory when she does her achievement and intelligence testing, she can study the relationships among reading achievement, ability to learn, and attitudes toward reading. She can explore the relationship between reading attitudes and social class, or test the possible effects of social adjustment or acceptance on reading attitudes.

In addition to a status survey, the teacher might wish to conduct a before and after testing program to examine changes that have come about over a period of a year or more. This before and after testing offers many possibilities in local school action research projects wherein two teachers or more may wish to establish control and experimental groups to test certain hypotheses pertaining to reading approaches, materials, techniques, etc.

Such concerns have practical application in the classroom as well as being of considerable theoretical interest.

In-Service Education

The San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude offers rewarding possibilities for use in teachers' in-service betterment programs.

A principal and a group of teachers might wish to use the instrument as a vehicle for a child study activity related to students' reading problems. The group would hypothesize causes for certain negative reading attitudes and, in turn, attempt to validate these hypotheses through anecdotal record keeping of students' behavior.

Another in-service usage of the Inventory might simply be a series of meetings wherein teachers would attempt to identify more definitively the nature of reading attitudes.

Regardless of the specific manner in which the Inventory is used in the in-service training of teachers, it should provide opportunities for viewing reading development in a broader scope and, in turn, teachers will discuss other means for using the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude.

Conferencing with Parents

Teachers have long known that the attitudes of parents toward reading influence the child's interest and performance. When a child comes from a home where reading materials are not available, the child is less likely to read or to be motivated toward learning to read. It would be quite useful to have a measure of a child's attitudes toward reading for use in parent conferences. If one can show the parents that they can help the child by demonstrating the value of reading at home, or through planning family activities which involve reading and language

activity, it should be possible to enlist their help in changing the student's attitudes.

It will also be possible to demonstrate the relationship of self-regarding attitudes toward interest in reading activities. We would be able to explain to parents that their child cannot be expected to enjoy an activity in which he is criticized or devalued. We can help them to see ways of making reading activities rewarding rather than frightening for the child. We can teach them that children will learn to read only if reading will bring them acceptance, or will serve some other purpose.

It might be quite interesting to administer the San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude to a group of parents and thereby give them an opportunity to think through seriously their own attitudes toward reading.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY
INVENTORY OF READING ATTITUDE

Name_____ Grade_____ Boy Girl
Last First Middle

School_____ Teacher_____

Date of Test_____
Mo. Day Yr.

TO BOYS AND GIRLS:

This sheet has some questions about reading which can be answered YES or NO. Your answers will show what you usually think about reading. After each question is read to you, circle your answer.

INSTRUCTIONS TO PUPILS

Draw a circle around the word YES or NO, whichever shows your answer.

Sample A

Yes No Do you like to read?

If you like to read, you should have drawn a circle around the word YES in Sample A; if you do not like to read, you should have drawn a circle around the word NO.

Sample B

Yes No Do you read as well as you would like to?

If you read as well as you would like to, you should have drawn a circle around the word YES in Sample B; if not, you should have drawn a circle around the word NO.

Yes	No	1.	Do you like to read before you go to bed?
Yes	No	2.	Do you think that you are a poor reader?
Yes	No	3.	Are you interested in what other people read?
Yes	No	4.	Do you like to read when your mother and dad are reading?
Yes	No	5.	Is reading your favorite subject at school?
Yes	No	6.	If you could do anything you wanted to do, would reading be one of the things you would choose to do?
Yes	No	7.	Do you think that you are a good reader for your age?
Yes	No	8.	Do you like to read catalogues?
Yes	No	9.	Do you think that most things are more fun than reading?
Yes	No	10.	Do you like to read aloud for other children at school?
Yes	No	11.	Do you think reading recipes is fun?
Yes	No	12.	Do you like to tell stories?
Yes	No	13.	Do you like to read the newspaper?
Yes	No	14.	Do you like to read all kinds of books at school?
Yes	No	15.	Do you like to answer questions about things you have read?
Yes	No	16.	Do you think it is a waste of time to make rhymes with words?
Yes	No	17.	Do you like to talk about books you have read?
Yes	No	18.	Does reading make you feel good?
Yes	No	19.	Do you feel that reading time is the best part of the school day?
Yes	No	20.	Do you find it hard to write about what you have read?
Yes	No	21.	Would you like to have more books to read?
Yes	No	22.	Do you like to read hard books?
Yes	No	23.	Do you think that there are many beautiful words in poems?
Yes	No	24.	Do you like to act out stories that you have read in books?
Yes	No	25.	Do you like to take reading tests?

KEY: Questions 2, 9, 16, and 20 should be answered NO; the remaining questions should be answered YES.